

Administration of Barack Obama, 2015

Remarks at Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii
December 25, 2015

The President. Hello, everybody! Merry Christmas! *Mele Kalikimaka!* Happy New Year! Happy Hanukkah! We just want to—hope you guys are having a great holiday. And it is wonderful to see all of you.

This is one of our favorite things to do every single year, because not only are we in Hawaii for Christmas——

Audience members. Yes!

The President. ——but we're also able to say thank you on behalf of the American people. So many families here are serving tirelessly. And it's not just those in uniform who serve, it's also the spouses, the kids. There are times where you're missing birthdays, missing soccer games, making sacrifices.

As we know, when you're deployed overseas, it's tough. And even though we've been able to reduce the number of folks who are deployed in places like Iraq and Afghanistan, there are still folks over there every single day. And it's still dangerous, as we saw this past week; we had some outstanding, brave men and women who were killed.

And so we never take for granted what all of you do for the American people. You help keep us free. You help keep us strong. And whatever service you're in, whatever branch, we are extraordinarily grateful for everything that you do every single day. And we hope you guys had a wonderful Christmas.

For those of you who are with your families, that is a true blessing. For those of you who are still a little bit far away from home, we hope you had a chance to give them our best and let them know that we love them as well. Michelle and I are looking forward to taking pictures with all of you. And we see a couple of new babies this time. [*Laughter*] We always get our baby fix and—[*laughter*]—when we take these photos.

But the main thing I just want to say is keep up the extraordinary work. To Colonel Killeen and the rest of the commanding officers here, thank you for doing such an extraordinary job. And thank you for welcoming us as well. The only problem I've got when I'm here is having to work out with marines in the gym. [*Laughter*] Because I generally feel like your Commander in Chief is in pretty good shape, and then I get next to some guy curling a hundred pounds, and it makes me feel small. [*Laughter*] But that's okay. It gives me some inspiration. I'm going to work harder so I can keep up with you next year, all right?

Thank you, everybody. God bless you. Merry Christmas. Happy New Year.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:32 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Maj. Adrianna M. Vorderbruggen, T. Sgt. Joseph G. Lemm, S. Sgt. Louis M. Bonacasa, S. Sgt. Michael A. Cinco, S. Sgt. Chester J. McBride, and S. Sgt. Peter W. Taub, U.S. Air Force personnel who were killed in a terrorist attack near Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, on December 21; and Col. Sean C. Killeen, USMC, commanding officer, Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe, HI.

Locations: Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

Names: Bonacasa, Louis M.; Cinco, Michael A.; Killeen, Sean C.; Lemm, Joseph G.; McBride, Chester J.; Obama, Michelle; Taub, Peter W.; Vorderbruggen, Adrianna M.

Subjects: Afghanistan : Terrorist attack near Bagram Air Base; Armed Forces, U.S. : Military families; Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Deployment; Armed Forces, U.S. : Servicemembers :: Service and dedication; Hawaii : President's visits; Holidays and special observances : Christmas; Holidays and special observances : Hanukkah.

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